

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Delaney Lynch
Director of Marketing, Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden
515.402.4274
dlynch@dmbotanicalgarden.com



**American
Public Gardens
Association**
PublicGardens.org



**Greater Des Moines
Botanical Garden**

**Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden Receives Marketing Award
at American Public Gardens Association's 2026 Annual Conference**

*The Association's annual awards spotlight professionals and
programs shaping the future of public gardens.*

High-resolution images linked [HERE](#).

DES MOINES, Iowa (June 19, 2026) – The [American Public Gardens Association](#) (APGA) presented the Dorothy E. Hansell Marketing Award to [Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden](#) for its *Find Your True Nature* campaign during the Association's business and awards luncheon at the [2026 American Public Gardens Association Annual Conference](#) in San Francisco, California, on June 10, 2026.

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden launched their *Find Your True Nature* campaign to tell the story of a garden that is a true, year-round destination and not just a dome. Their use of every channel available (video, print, digital, social, signage, newsletters, a custom magazine and PR) to reach segmented audiences in personal ways allowed them to encourage every visitor to define “true nature” for themselves and reinforce inclusion.

“Receiving the Dorothy E. Hansell Marketing Award from the American Public Gardens Association is an incredible honor and a reflection of the creativity, dedication and vision of our team,” Kim Perez, President and CEO of the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, said. “Find Your True Nature is more than a marketing campaign, it is an invitation for people to see themselves in the Garden and discover the many ways plants, nature and community can enrich their lives. This recognition affirms our belief that public gardens are places of belonging, inspiration and connection, and we’re proud that this campaign helped more people experience the Botanical Garden as a year-round destination where everyone can find their true nature.”

The Find Your True Nature campaign results were measurable and historic, driving the highest visitor numbers in the Garden's history, with nearly 43,000 attendees across 10 signature events.

The Marketing Award is a tribute to Dorothy E. Hansell, former editor of the New York Botanical Garden's *Garden Journal*, the newsletter and bulletin of the Holly Society of America, the *American Bonsai Society Journal*, and the *APGA Bulletin*. In her honor, this award recognizes outstanding marketing and communications campaigns and/or publications that advance a public garden's mission.

The Association recognizes the individuals and organizations whose work is shaping the future of public horticulture through its Annual Awards program. Any APGA member is eligible for nomination, and recipients are selected by a volunteer Awards Committee of public garden professionals from across the field.

"Each year, we look forward to celebrating the most influential and innovative professionals and organizations in our industry, and I'm so proud of all of this year's winners," Michelle Provaznik, CEO of American Public Gardens Association said. "As garden professionals, we understand that public gardens are indispensable and inclusive places for all people to connect to plants and the natural world, but we want people to have that experience themselves. Marketing that allows audiences to see themselves in the garden and then prompts them to walk through the gates is one of the best examples of powerful storytelling in the field."

The awards ceremony is part of the annual conference that brings together nearly 1,000 public garden professionals from across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico for five days of education, networking, and collaboration.

The full list of 2026 APGA Annual Award winners are below:

Dorothy E. Hansell Marketing Award:

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden
Find Your True Nature Campaign

Honorary Life Member Award:

Christopher Dunn,
Elizabeth Newman Wilds, Executive Director
Emeritus, Cornell Botanic Gardens

Awards of Merit:

Kara Newport,
President & CEO, Filoli

Jennifer Ceska
Conservation Coordinator
State Botanical Garden of Georgia

Professional Citation Award:

Christy Rollinson
Senior Scientist, Forest Ecology
Morton Arboretum

Program Excellence Award:
New York Botanical Garden
Branch Out Program

Garden Excellence Award:
Colorado Springs Utilities

Operational Sustainability Award:
Queens Botanical Garden

###

About the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden is more than a dome, it's *the connection point* between plants, people and the natural world. It's a place where you can *be who you are, do the things you love* and *spend time* with the people who matter most. A place where anyone can explore, create, connect, and *find their true nature*. This urban oasis, located in downtown Des Moines, is a nonprofit that keeps growing because of the support of its members and volunteers. Located amidst a vibrant cityscape and lovely river views, the 12-acres of gardens are teeming with thousands of native plants and exotic greenery from across the world. Its verdant offerings include a soothing waterfall and pond, one of the country's most extensive bonsai collections and brilliant seasonal blooms galore. No matter the season, the Botanical Garden provides a range of fun, signature events and classes in an always friendly climate. In operation since 1979, it features an 80 feet tall geodesic-domed conservatory that includes a living wall and 18 outdoor gardens interspersed with sculptures, a serene water garden, regal rows of shade trees, walking paths, a stunning orchid collection, vibrant rose garden, unique Asian-style garden and much more.

About the American Public Gardens Association

Rooted in over eight decades of dedication, the American Public Gardens Association (APGA) champions and advances public gardens as global leaders in plant conservation, education, and appreciation. Guided by its core values—Cultivate Passion, Collaborate Authentically, Elevate Our Voice, and Grow Thoughtfully—APGA connects and empowers professionals through education, advocacy, and community. Representing more than 11,000 individuals across nearly 600 institutions in all 50 states and 20 countries, APGA's members include botanic gardens, arboreta, zoos, museums, universities, cemeteries, and urban greenspaces worldwide. Learn more at <https://www.publicgardens.org/>.